IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1 and 4 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A fixing method comprising:

heat-pressure-fixing an unfixed toner image formed on a recording medium by using fixing means,

wherein the unfixed toner image is fixed when the recording medium passes through at least two fixing units arranged in series in a conveying direction of the recording medium,

wherein a toner for forming the unfixed toner image comprises a toner containing a release agent,

wherein the following formulas (1) and (2) are satisfied when a maximum temperature on the recording medium when the recording medium passes through a first fixing unit is denoted by T1, a maximum temperature on the recording medium when the recording medium passes through a second fixing unit is denoted by T2, a minimum temperature on the recording medium during a time period commencing on ejection of the recording medium from the first fixing unit and ending on entry of the recording medium into the second fixing unit is denoted by t, a flow tester softening temperature of the toner is denoted by Ts, and a flow starting temperature of the toner is denoted by Tfb:

$$T1 > Tfb \qquad \text{formula (1)}$$

$$T2 > t > Ts \qquad \text{formula (2)},$$

wherein the maximum temperature T1 on a recording medium when the recording medium passes through a first fixing unit is 110 to 160 °C, and the maximum temperature T2 on the recording medium when the recording medium passes through a second fixing unit is 140 to

190 °C, ~~and~~

wherein a peak temperature of a maximum endothermic peak is in a range of 60 to 140 °C in an endothermic curve in differential scanning calorimetry on the toner, and

wherein the first fixing unit is a belt nip fixing type fixing unit, and the second fixing unit is a roller nip fixing type fixing unit.

2. (Previously Presented) The fixing method according to claim 1, wherein, when a flow tester 1/2 method melting temperature of the toner is denoted by T1/2, T1/2 and T2 satisfy the following formula (3):

$$T2 > T1/2 \qquad \text{formula (3).}$$

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently Amended) A fixing device comprising:

fixing means for heat-pressure-fixing an unfixed toner image formed on a recording medium, the fixing means comprising fixing units which are heat-pressure-fixing type devices,

wherein the unfixed toner image is fixed when the recording medium passes through at least two of the fixing units arranged in series in a conveying direction of the recording medium,

wherein a toner for forming the unfixed toner image comprises a toner containing a release agent,

wherein the following formulas (1) and (2) are satisfied when a maximum temperature on the recording medium when the recording medium passes through a first fixing unit is denoted by T1, a maximum temperature on the recording medium when the recording medium passes

through a second fixing unit is denoted by T2, a minimum temperature on the recording medium during a time period commencing on ejection of the recording medium from the first fixing unit and ending on entry of the recording medium into the second fixing unit is denoted by t, a flow tester softening temperature of the toner is denoted by Ts, and a flow starting temperature of the toner is denoted by Tfb:

$$T1 > Tfb \qquad \text{formula (1)}$$

$$T2 > t > Ts \qquad \text{formula (2)}$$

wherein the maximum temperature T1 on a recording medium when the recording medium passes through a first fixing unit is 110 to 160 °C, and the maximum temperature T2 on the recording medium when the recording medium passes through a second fixing unit is 140 to 190 °C, ~~and~~

wherein a peak temperature of a maximum endothermic peak is in a range of 60 to 140 °C in an endothermic curve in differential scanning calorimetry on the toner, and

wherein the first fixing unit is a belt nip fixing type fixing unit, and the second fixing unit is a roller nip fixing type fixing unit.

5. (Previously Presented) The fixing device according to claim 4, wherein, when a flow tester 1/2 method melting temperature of the toner is denoted by T1/2, T1/2 and T2 satisfy the following formula (3):

$$T2 > T1/2 \qquad \text{formula (3).}$$

6. (Cancelled)